

Seattle Japanese Garden

Photo by Rosewoman

The Seattle Japanese Garden's 2014 season opened on March 1. To ensure a wonderful season, Reverend Koichi Barrish of the Tsubaki Grand Shrine honored the Garden with a traditional Shinto blessing. As the garden nears the end of its 2014 season, we're reflecting on the past nine months and celebrating the abundance of accomplishments the garden enjoyed.

Seattle Parks, in partnership with the Associated Recreation Council, the Arboretum Foundation, Unit 86 Docents, Tankokai Seattle and the Japanese Garden Advisory Council, has been able to provide a very successful and well-loved facility that promotes our core values of access, opportunity and sustainability.

The Seattle Japanese Garden is one of the most celebrated Japanese gardens outside of Japan. This year it was named one of Seattle's hidden gems by [King5 News](#), one of the best places to welcome spring by [RedTricycle](#) and one of the most spectacular locations to view fall foliage by [Seattle Refined](#) and [Seattle's Child](#).

STATISTICS

- Total attendance to date: 61,000 (as of 10/21/14)
- Number of family events: 3
- Total family event attendance: 2,525
- Number of adult events: 5
- Total adult event attendance: 1,425
- Total volunteers: 80
- Total volunteer hours: 1,500
- Total public guided tours given: 110
- Total photography sessions: 20
- Total Chado demonstrations: 10
- Total Chado presentations: 18
- Total school group attendance: 700
- Net Sales: \$300,000 (as of 10/21/14)

MAINTENANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Seattle Parks professional gardening staff and volunteers did an excellent job manicuring and maintaining the garden at a high level. This season saw the completion of Phase 1 of the pond project through contributions from Seattle Parks and the Japanese Garden Society. Capital Improvements included lining the small head pools at the base of the stream and waterfall with a concrete bottom and redefined shoreline, replacing the pump system with larger capacity pumps that are easier to operate, installing light weight lids at the pump vault and improving the screening system at the pond overflow. The renovations have resulted in cleaner water, easier sediment removal and made the system safer and easier to maintain. Additional work on the pond and facilities is anticipated in the near future.

EVENT AND COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

Eight events were held this season to give the public a chance to experience Japanese cultural traditions, as well as to appreciate the unique species of plants and

PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



Photo by Marcia M Mueller



Photo by David Okrent



Photo by Rusted Van Photography

features in the garden. An emphasis on attracting families resulted in the Maple Viewing Festival being promoted as a family event for the first time, adding child-friendly arts and crafts as well as a maple tree scavenger hunt—made possible by the installation of maple species identification tags. The event attracted a total of 1,100 attendees with a marked increase in children ages 6 -12.

Visitor experiences were significantly enhanced by the efforts of volunteers, who collectively put in over 1,500 hours to perform a wide variety of services, from guiding tours, setting up event equipment, providing continuing education programs, taking photographs and weeding.

Seattle Parks would like to thank our volunteer partners Haiku Northwest, The Prentice Bloedel Unit 86, Seattle Astronomical Society, University of Washington Botanical Gardens, Meito-kai, Kogut Butoh and the Japan Arts Connection Lab. A growing number of individuals support the Seattle Japanese Garden directly, contributing to garden maintenance and day-of-event staff support.

- [Opening Day First Viewing](#), March 1, 160 visitors
- [Children's Day](#), May 26, 800 visitors
- [Tanabata Celebration](#), July 6, 625 visitors
- [Moon Viewing](#), Sept. 6, 300 visitors
- [Wandering and Wondering](#), Aug. 10, 550 visitors
- [Respect for Elders Day](#), Sept. 15, 300 visitors
- [Japanese Noh Theater](#), Sept. 25, 65 visitors
- [Maple Viewing Festival](#), Oct. 12, 1,100 visitors **(2.5 visitors entered the garden every minute for seven hours straight!)**

Overall attendance is estimated to reach 64,000 by the end of the season on Nov. 30, representing a 10% increase from 2013. Admission sales for families with children seem to be on the rise. **Sales increased 40% this year.**

The Seattle Japanese Garden's popularity continues to grow with the community. This season, the garden boasts:

- ◆ 5,000 likes on Facebook
- ◆ 100 public tours to approximately 500 garden visitors
- ◆ 40 private tours including school tours, gardening clubs and a goodwill delegation from the Tankokai Youth Association of Hyogo Prefecture
- ◆ Nearly 150 visitors experienced Chado, the Way of Tea, in the tranquil Shoseian Tea House located within the Seattle Japanese Garden
- ◆ 1,400 listserv subscribers (200 subscribers added in the last few months!)

The Legacy of our Park System includes the Japanese Garden and our continued management, programming and oversight of this Crown Jewel. We are honored to give the people in the Pacific Northwest the opportunity to connect with Japanese culture and look forward to continuing that tradition with our partners next season and into the future.



Photo by Marcia M Mueller



Photo by David Okrent



Photo by Aurora Santiago Photography



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